

LONE WOLF

AND

子
狼
と
水
鏡

CUB

VOLUME 21

FRAGRANCE
OF DEATH

By KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA



子連水猿

LONE WOLF AND CUB



story
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art
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FRAGRANCE OF DEATH

KAZUO KOIKE
& GOSEKI KOJIMA

子連れ狼



VOLUME

21

A NOTE TO READERS

Lone Wolf and Cub is famous for its carefully researched re-creation of Edo-Period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain many Edo-Period terms that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous synonyms. In the glossary, you may encounter words with multiple meanings. These are words written with Chinese ideograms that are pronounced the same but carry different meanings. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning it is, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet. *O-yurushi o* (please forgive us)!

LONE WOLF AND CUB



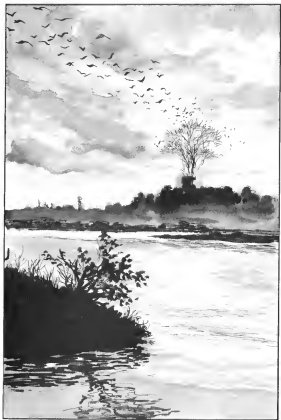
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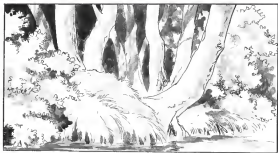


*the hundred
and third*

Poison Currents

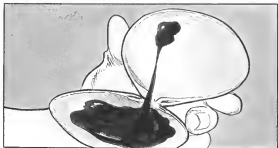




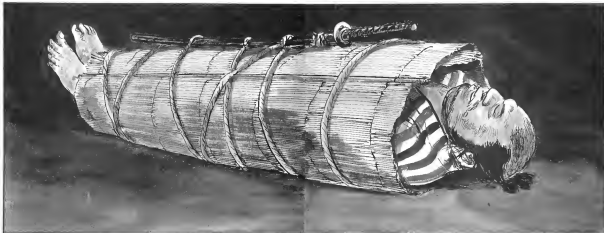




THAT'S WHAT
THIS IS FOR. YOU
DON'T SWALLOW
WHEN YOU'RE OUT
GOLD. I CAN LAST
HALF AN HOUR.





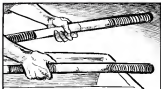






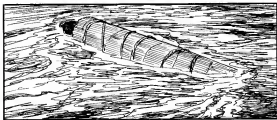






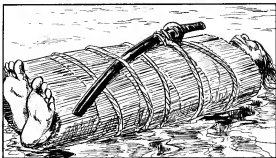




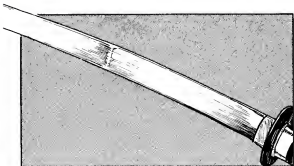










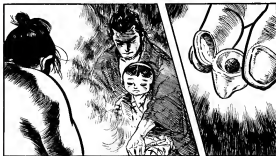








































EVEN ASLEEP,
EVEN UNCONSCIOUS,
NEVER AT REST...



SHIN-SEI, CATCHING
THE BLOOD AGONY,
KIMU-SEI, CATCHING THE
BREATHES OF AN ATTACK
ON THE SKIN, THEY
MOVE THE SWORDS,
BY THEMSELVES.



AND ITSELF,
MIND AND BODY
AS ONE.

I DON'T
BELIEVE
THAT CRAP...
I WON'T
BELIEVE IT...
BUT, BUT...



THROW
THEM!

































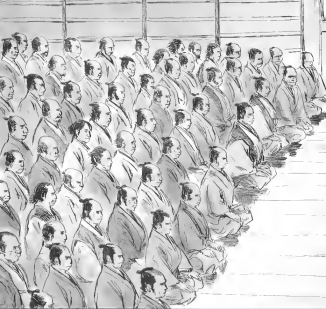


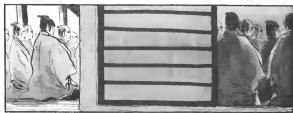


*the hundred
and fourth*

Flood of Fire











MEN!

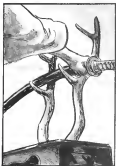
**LISTEN
WELL!**



**FEN DAYS
HAVE PASSED
SINCE DOAM ITTO
AND HIS SON
ENTERED DOO!**

**WE'VE TRIED
TRICKS AND PLOTS,
AND FAILED!
WE STAND UPON
THE PRECIPICE!**

NO MORE
STRAFFORD!
WE TAKE HIM
HEAD ON!







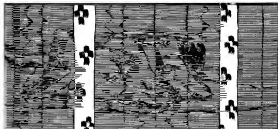






























I'VE
FOUND HIM,
OF COURSE.
EVERYTHING'S
SET.

I WAS
GOING TO
STRIKE THE
MOMENT I WAS
WELL.



REGARDLESS,
YOU WILL NOW
STEP ASIDE.

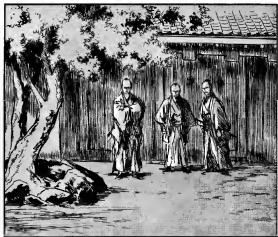


OUR
PREPARATIONS
ARE COMPLETE.
I'VE NOTIFIED THE
D-RETSUNKE AND
MAGN-BURRO.

WANTED
FOSTERS ARE
UP ACROSS EGG.
ALL ROADS ALONG
THE RIVERS ARE
CLOSED.

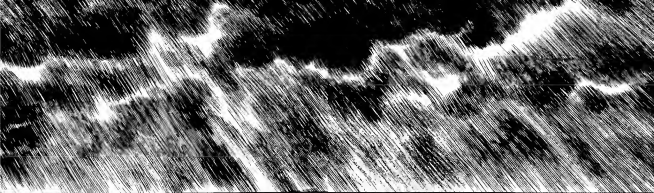
NO ONE'S
ALLOWED
ACROSS THE
HORIZONING
LINE.



















I BURY HIM,
YOU ASSHOLE?
IT'S MY REASON FROM
AWAYING THE DEADST
MORON THAT FELL IN
MY LAIR! I'LL ASSURE
GIVE IT BACK!



HEH HEH HEH...
MY LONG WOLF MOUTH...
STILL TOO TOUGH TO EAT,
BUT I'LL BARK MY TEETH
INTO YOU FIFT!



ADD SOME
FADING SPACE,
AND THERE'S
NOTHING THERE
IN THE WORLD!

THE
DISGRACE
ITSELF, IN THE
PAIR OF MY
AWAYING! BWAH
HEH HEH

















YES...

HOW...?



YOU
THINK I'D
WISH YOU
UNPREPARED?

WE YAMU
HAVE OUR
OWN ANTIDOTE-
JINGI BOPU.

AH...?



I WANTED
PROOF,
AND YOU
FELL FOR
IT!

KNOW YOUR
STATION,
RESPECTFULLY
YOU CONTROL
THE ANTIPODE
ARMORY!



ARE-NO-TIME









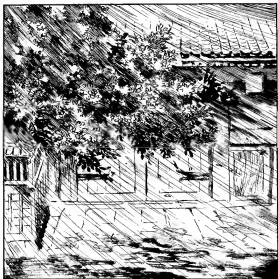




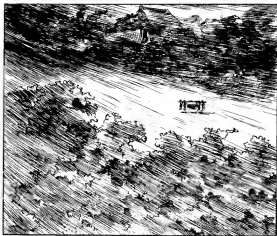
















WHERE
ABE-KO-KAI
BOES, WE FIND
LONG WOLF!

WE NEED
ONLY FOLLOW
TANOSH'S TRAIL
LEADS BUT
ONE WAY.

HE HAS TO
KILL LONG WOLF
BEFORE OUR LORD
HANDS DOWN HIS
JUDGEMENT! REPORT
HIS VICTORY, AND SEE
FOR MERCY!



BUT I
WON'T LET HIM!
I'LL KILL THEM ALL,
LONG WOLF
AND TANOSH!
TOGETHER!

NOW,
ON THE WINGS
OF STORM,
WE BECOME
THE WILDFIRES!
BURNING ALL
BEFORE US!



ADVANCE!!

RYAHH!!



*the hundred
and fifth*

Fire, Water, and Poison























































SKCH

SHRRRK

HAILEEK!

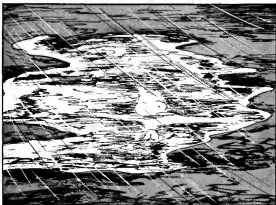
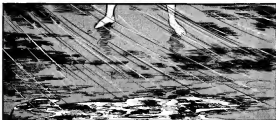


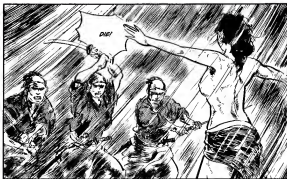






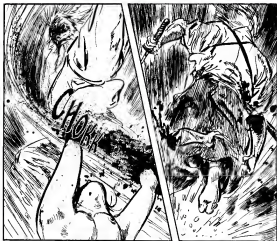


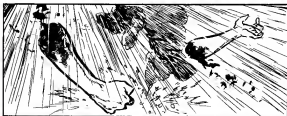


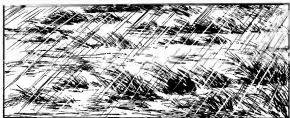






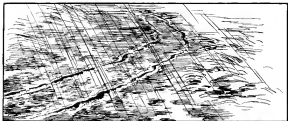


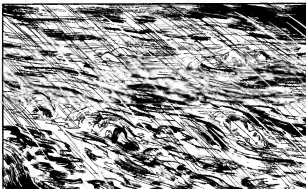




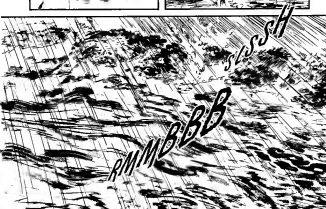


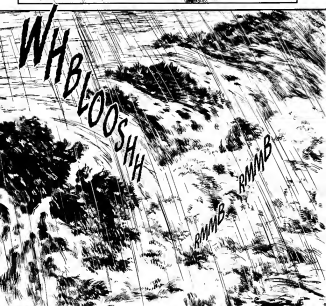


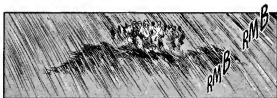


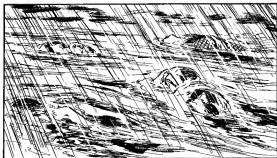














IN WHICH CASE, IT'D FOUGHT WITH MY NIGHTMARE AHEAD



MY LORD...
THE BORDER BETWEEN
KUNEDOKU, SAGAMI DOO,
THEN FUKUSAGA.

WE'LL GO
AROUND!

WASH!!
WASH!!

HAH!

WFF!
WFF!











THEY
ALSO SERVE
WHO SIT AND
WAIT.

UNION
MEN ARE...



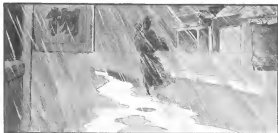
*the hundred
and sixth*

Fragrance of Death







































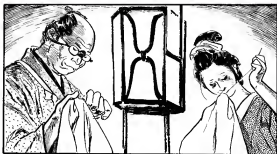






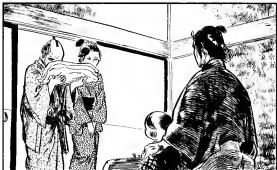












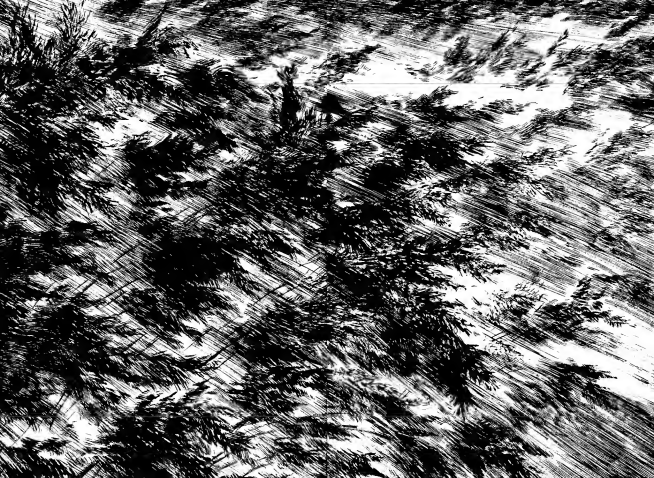






OHAN
ITTO-
SAMA.

AND
HIS SON'S
NAME...
DANSOHO.









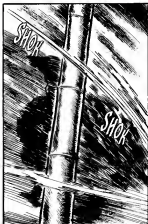




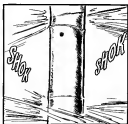


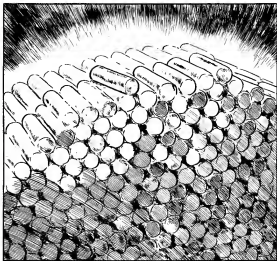
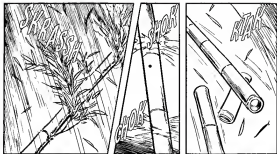








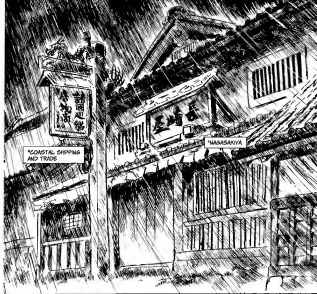


















TOSHIKAZU!



I TRIED
ONE AT SEA.
VERY IMPRESSIVE...



THE
FORTY
THOUSAND
IS OUT
FRONT,
CAST IN
NETS.

PLEASE
CHECK.



I CAN'T
HAND THEM
OVER IMMEDIATELY.
I HAD TO CONSIDER
THEM...

CAN YOU
DELIVER THEM?
JOMU TEMPLE,
FURAGAWA?



UNDERSTOOD
EARLY MORNING...
ON MY WORD









BAMBOO
CRAFTSMAN,
BUDO-NO-CHIKUANI—
FIFTY-SEVEN

BUT IN YEARS PAST,
SERVANT TO THE FAMILY
OF OSAME ITTO'S WIFE ADAMI,
MURDERED BY THE YASUGI.



*the hundred
and seventh*

Kaï's Lullaby













DRINK AND HEK
HEK AND DRINK
POISONER'S
CHILD

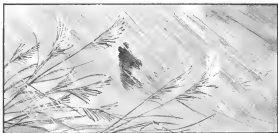


PASS ME
YOUR TEA CUP
TO DRINK YOUR
POISON BY

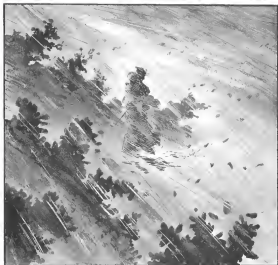


POISON
SO BITTER
HARD TO KEEP
IT DOWN

ROMPA'S POK
SO SWEET
DRINK UNTIL
YOU DROWN!







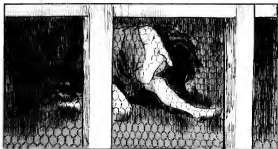














...THE YEAR
BEFORE I
WAS BORN.



SHE RAN AWAY
AND DIDN'T COME BACK
FOR TWENTY DAYS
AND WHEN SHE DID,
SHE ROARED
OF MANY MEN.



AND THEN...
SHE GOT BIG
WITH ME.

THERE'S A MAN
IN THIS HOUSE
I CALL FATHER...
BUT WHO'S MY
REAL FATHER..?



THE HANDS SAY
MOMMA'S SICK.
'CUZ SHE ALWAYS
WANTS A MAN.



DO PEOPLE
GET BACK
THAT WAY?



I HATE
DODGING MY
POMMA LIKE
THIS.



HATE IT,
HATE IT,
HATE IT...

TAKOCHI!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING?



I TOLD
YOU NOT
TO COME
HERE!



FATHER...
I HAVE TO
CALL HIM
FATHER.



HE'S A
GREAT MAN
THE SHOGUN'S
FOOD TASTER...
ARE JEANOTSU!









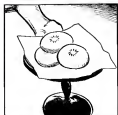




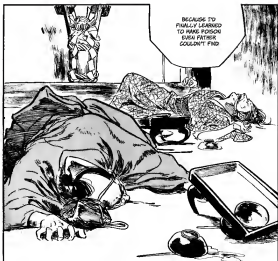












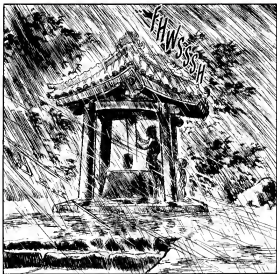






























WHAT
OH...?



WHY-?
FOURTEEN
ROBOS...?

WE
HAVE OUR
REASONS.



MEANS...
DON'T ASK?

WHEN YOU
SEE THE HEAD
PRIEST, TELL HIM
WE ARE FOREVER
IN HIS DEBT.















NO!!!



S...S...
GRIND AND...
HEX
....



HEX
AND GRIND...
PO...POISONER'S
CHILD...

PA...
PASS
AROUND...
YOUR SANE
CUP...



PO...
POISON SO BITTER...
HARD TO KEEP IT DOWN...
POHNA'S MILK SO
SWEET...

GRIND AND HEX,
HEX AND GRIND...
HEX, GRIND...
STIR...









EVEN ..
EVEN IF I REM,
THEY'LL
CATCH ME!



AND YET...
I CAN'T EVEN
FIGHT LONG
WOLF AND
GUB!



IT'S A
MIRACLE I'VE
STILL GOT
MY HEAD...



SHIT!



THAT'S IT!
MY HEAD! IF I
KNOW FETTERED
IT'S NOT
ATTACHED...

HEE HEE!
OF
COURSE!



I'M
A SCOUND!
HAI!
A DRAKON!







GLOSSARY

afuyō

A type of opiate drug.

buke

Samurai families.

bushi

A samurai. A member of the warrior class.

bushidō

The way of the warrior. Also known as *shidō*.

Edo

Edo was a castle town, that rose up around the moats and ramparts of Edo castle, the stronghold of the Tokugawa clan. The central core of the city, administered by the *machi-bugyō* city commissioner, who reported directly to the shōgun's senior counselors, and was demarcated on official maps by a black line, the *karabiki*, and was called the *go-furui*.

habutae

Unbleached, white silk.

hashi

Chopsticks

honorifics

Japan is a class and status society, and proper forms of address are

critical. Common markers of respect are the prefixes *e* and *go*, and a wide range of suffixes. Some of the suffixes you will encounter in *Love Wolf and Cub*:

chan – for children, young women, and close friends

dono – archaic; used for higher-ranked or highly respected figures

san – the most common, used among equals or near-equals

sama – used for superiors

sensei – used for teachers, masters, respected entertainers, and politicians.

ibuki bōfū

Carrot-like root plant with medicinal properties.

ki

Energy. The fundamental mind/body energy of Eastern medicine.

kōgi kaishakunin

The shōgun's own second, who performed executions ordered by the shōgun.

kuchiyaku

Kuchiyaku were the tasters for the shōgun family. They were called kuchiyaku, or "official mouths," because they checked for poison with their own tongues.

machi-bugyō

The Edo city commissioner, combining the post of mayor and chief of police. A post held in monthly rotation by two senior Tokugawa vassals, in charge of administration, maintaining the peace, and enforcing the law in Edo. Their rule extended only to commoners; samurai in Edo were controlled by their own *daimyō* and his officers. The *machi-bugyō* had an administrative staff and a small force of armed policemen at his disposal.

netsuke

Inspector. A post combining the functions of chief of police and chief intelligence officer.

mizugori

To purify yourself with cold water before asking a favor of Buddha or the gods.

mochi

A sticky rice cake, a traditional food to celebrate the new year, made by pounding sweet rice with mallets.

rōnin

A masterless samurai. Literally, "one adrift on the waves." Members of the samurai caste who have lost their masters through the dissolution of *han*, expulsion for misbehavior, or other reasons. Prohibited from working as farmers or merchants under the strict Confucian caste system imposed by the Tokugawa shōgunate, many impoverished *rōnin* became "hired guns" for whom the

code of the samurai was nothing but empty words.

sakayaki

The topknot favored in the Edo period. Still seen on sumo wrestlers today.

sankin kōtai

The Tokugawa required that all *daimyō* spend every other year in Edo, with family members remaining behind when they returned to their *han*. This practice increased Edo's control over the *daimyō*, both political and fiscal, since the cost of maintaining two separate households and traveling to and from the capital placed a huge strain on *han* finances.

sanzu

Three Ways. The river that divides the land of the living from *meido*, the land of the dead.

sumaki

A form of lynching. The victim is beaten, rolled up in a mat, and thrown into a river.

tōtekirai

Hand-thrown explosives. A primitive hand grenade.

yakuza

Japan's criminal syndicates. In the Edo period, *yakuza* were a common part of the landscape, running houses of gambling and prostitution. As long as they did not overstep their bounds, they were tolerated by the authorities, a tradition little changed in modern Japan.

KAZUO KOIKE

Though widely respected as a powerful writer of graphic fiction, Kazuo Koike has spent a lifetime reaching beyond the bounds of the comics medium. Aside from co-creating and writing the successful *Lone Wolf and Cub* and *Crying Freeman* manga, Koike has hosted television programs; founded a golf magazine; produced movies; written popular fiction, poetry, and screenplays; and mentored some of Japan's best manga talent.

Lone Wolf and Cub was first serialized in Japan in 1970 (under the title *Kozure Ōkami*) in *Manga Action* magazine and continued its hugely popular run for many years, being collected as the stories were published, and reprinted worldwide. Koike collected numerous awards for his work on the series throughout the next decade. Starting in 1973, Koike adapted the popular manga into a series of six films, the *Baby Cart Assassin* saga, garnering widespread commercial success and critical acclaim for his screenwriting.

This wasn't Koike's only foray into film and video. In 1996, *Crying Freeman*, the manga Koike created with artist Ryōichi Ikegami, was

produced in Hollywood and released to commercial success in Europe and is currently awaiting release in America.

And to give something back to the medium that gave him so much, Koike started the *Gekiga Senjaku*, a college course aimed at helping talented writers and artists — such as *Batman 1/2* creator Rumiko Takahashi — break into the comics field.

The driving focus of Koike's narrative is character development, and his commitment to character is clear. "Comics are carried by characters. If a character is well created, the comic becomes a lit." Kazuo Koike's continued success in comics and literature has proven this philosophy true.



GOSEKI KOJIMA

Goseki Kojima was born on November 3, 1928, the very same day as the godfather of Japanese comics, Osamu Tezuka. While just out of junior high school, the self-taught Kojima began painting advertising posters for movie theaters to pay his bills.

In 1950, Kojima moved to Tokyo, where the postwar devastation had given rise to special manga forms for audiences too poor to buy the new manga magazines. Kojima created art for *kami-shibubai*, or “paper-play” narrators, who would use manga story sheets to present narrated street plays. Kojima moved on to creating works for the *kashu-ban* market, bookstores that rented out books, magazines, and manga to mostly low-income readers. He soon became highly popular among *kashu-ban* readers.

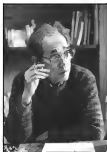
In 1967, Kojima broke into the magazine market with his series *Dogibiki*. As the manga magazine market grew and diversified, he turned out a steady stream of popular series

In 1970, in collaboration with Kazuo Koike, Kojima began the work that would seal his reputation, *Akare*

Okami (*Red Wolf and Cub*). Before long, the story had become a gigantic hit, eventually spinning off a television series, six motion pictures, and even theme song records. Koike and Kojima were soon dubbed the “golden duo” and produced success after success on their way to the pinnacle of the manga world.

When *Manga Japan* magazine was launched in 1994, Kojima was asked to serve as consultant, and he helped train the next generation of manga artists.

In his final years, Kojima turned to creating original graphic novels based on the movies of his favorite director, Akira Kurosawa. Kojima passed away on January 5, 2000 at the age of 71.



THE RONIN REPORT

By David S. Hofhine

An Authentic Example of a Dotanuki School Sword: part two

The tang of this blade is as thick as the blade itself and runs most of the length of the handle to fortify the handle against breakage. This tang is signed on both sides in Japanese kanji, with one side signed Higo Dotanuki Munehiro (fig. 5), indicating that the blade was forged by a smith named Munehiro from the Dotanuki school working in Higo province. The other side is signed *Ten-po ju nen san gatsu nichí* (fig. 6), which is the date that the blade was forged, being "a day in the third month of the 10th year of *Ten-po*," or March 1839. This particular Dotanuki was forged about 180 years after the events depicted in *Lone Wolf and Cub*.

There is always some question as to whether a signature is false (*gimei*) or true (*shoshin mei*), since faking big-name signatures is an artform almost as old as blade forging itself. A good friend of mine living in Japan is a great authority on Japanese swords and also happens to own



Fig. 5

another blade made by this exact same smith, which has been authenticated by top experts in Japan. This judgment is made by comparing not only the signatures of the two blades, but also the shape, style, *ji-hada*, *hamon*, and all other features of the blade collectively.

A final and sweet bit of history associated with this blade is its original Higo province mountings. This is particularly intriguing because the Dotanuki were based in Higo, and this appears to be the original



Fig. 6

mounting first crafted for the sword when it was newly forged in 1839. These mountings are largely composed of wood and lacquer and do not normally stand the test of time as well as a steel blade, so having the sword's original mounting is a great boon.

The handle, or *tsuka* (fig. 7), is made of *honoki* wood carefully carved to fit the tang exactly. It is then covered with *samé*, which is the very rough and bony skin of a flat fish, something like a ray, found in the Sea of Japan. The *samé* has been coated in a dark red lacquer to complement the scabbard, and the ends are fitted with metal caps called *fuchi* and *kashira*. The end caps for this handle are made of fine copper covered in *shakudo*, which is a glossy black alloy mixture of copper and gold, and are further engraved with an *oxalis* vine pattern inlaid with silver and gold.



Fig. 7

Typical of Higo mounts, the handle is wrapped with a type of thin, fine leather and is still in very good shape for its age. I have it on good authority that this wrapping is most likely monkey skin! Apparently monkey was a popular handle wrapping material at one time, while today a flat cord of silk is most commonly used.

Under the wrapping are two metal ornaments called *menuki*. These are a traditional part of a Japanese sword handle and help to improve the grip somewhat. The *menuki* are in the pattern of a stylized frog and fish in *shakudo* and gold. Often there is some sort of story or significance to the images and patterns on sword fittings, but what the frog and fish might signify here is beyond my knowledge.

Between the handle and the blade is the guard, or *tsuba* (fig. 8). This divides the blade from the handle, protecting the hands when the blade is in use, and is often covered with elaborate engravings and inlays depicting an infinite variety of themes and motifs. This *tsuba* is in the shape of a particular family crest known as *hiki*, a bar or bars in a circle, most likely indicating the family affiliation of the original owner. This crest was used by the Nitta, Ishiki, Iwamatsu, Sakakibara, Yamane, and Ura families.

This *tsuba* is further engraved with an *oxalis* vine pattern, which appears to have originally been inlaid with gold and matches the pattern of the *fuchi* and *kashira* on the handle. There is also a small dovetailed area at the top of the *tsuba* where a metal inlay seems to have fallen out.



Fig. 8

The scabbard, or *saya* (fig. 9), is carved wood covered in lacquer with carved black horn parts. The lacquer is in a black-and-red swirl pattern, and was done by building up a very thick coating of black lacquer with rippled brush strokes and then covering this with red lacquer. The final surface is then polished down part way through the red lacquer revealing the black in streaks. The final effect is dramatic and very attractive.

This sword is an authentic Dotanuki, but it is a bit different than the one used by Itto Ogami. Its handle and tang are a bit shorter than usual for its blade length, though the handle may have been made shorter at the request of the owner. By this late date, the owner would have likely been more bureaucrat than *bushi* and may not have wanted to bother with carrying around a longer, more cumbersome weapon. This could also have been due to a strong western influence that was creeping into Japan by the mid-nineteenth century. Western swords of the period were generally meant to be wielded in a single

hand as opposed to the traditional two-handed *katana* and therefore had much shorter handles.

There is something a little peculiar about the overall appearance of this blade, however. While it is definitely a Dotanuki blade, it has more in common with the old Hizen school blades than it does with the old Dotanuki school work. The difference between the Hizen and neighboring Higo Dotanuki blades was a major theme of my last article (see *LW&C* vol. 12). The slender shape and exceptionally fine *ji-hada* of this blade are both more characteristic of the refined and elegant Hizen blades, than of the utilitarian choppers the Dotanuki were known to produce during that time period. It seems that 240 years of relative peace finally caught up with the Dotanuki, and they were eventually made to cater more to the aesthetics of the samurai nobleman than the martial penchant of the samurai warriors of old.

At any rate and by any measure, this is a very fine blade with an exceptional mounting, and it has been my great pleasure to share this unique treasure with my fellow *Lone Wolf and Cub* enthusiasts. If you would like more information on Japanese swords or sword polishing in general, please feel free to visit my website at www.swordpolish.com.



Fig. 9

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As the trail of blood and honor gets deeper and longer, corruption and double crossings abound. Two considerably evil and ambitious forces, previously teamed to finally kill the vengeful samurai Itto Ogami, clash in the torrential rains that continue to pound Edo. Determined to be the first to reach Itto and his son Diagoro, the shogun's own poisoner waits in a temple where the samurai and his toddler boy left their cart, reflecting on the path that has led him to this point, and brewing his most deadly poison. Meanwhile, the Lone Wolf and Cub enlist the aid of a tailor to prepare robes of white silk for what could be their last stand! There's something in the air, and it smells like death!

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